

**Remarks by Ambassador Beatrice W. Walters
At 2012 Iftar
Ambassador's Residence, Long Circular, Port of Spain
On Friday July 27, 2012**

Good Evening!

And a special thank you to Maulana Mohammed for that beautiful recitation from the holy Quran and Imam Abzal Mohammed for the opening prayer.

I am pleased to welcome you all on the behalf of the Government and People of the United States of America.

I would like to wish all the Muslims of Trinidad and Tobago and the 1.6 billion Muslims around the world Ramadan Kareem.

Tonight I join President Obama, Secretary Clinton and Ambassadors around the world in opening my home so that we can break bread together and celebrate Ramadan.

This is a time of reflection and devotion when we join with family and friends in celebration.

It is fitting that we should come together tonight just as thousands of athletes from over 200 countries and territories are coming together in London for the Summer Olympics.

I know we'll all be rooting for Richard Thompson and the rest of Trinidad and Tobago's team in the coming weeks.

Tonight is also an important date in the history of this twin island nation, for it is the anniversary of the attempted coup in 1990.

Tonight we should remember how the people of Trinidad and Tobago, including all of the prominent Muslim organizations, came together to condemn the violence and ensure the restoration of democracy.

Today Trinidad and Tobago's Muslim community continues to work to develop this nation and enrich the lives of all Trinbagonians.

As President Obama said "Islamic culture has given us majestic arches and soaring spires; timeless poetry and cherished music; elegant calligraphy and places of peaceful contemplation.

And throughout history, Islam has demonstrated through words and deeds the possibilities of religious tolerance and racial equality."

President Obama has worked to increase mutual understanding between the United States and Muslims everywhere.

Not long ago the State Department's Special Representative for Muslim Communities, Farah Pandith visited Trinidad and commented on the promise and potential of the young leaders she met.

This year I am very pleased to announce that the Embassy is working with leaders of the Muslim community to launch a chapter of a new organization for young Muslim leaders called "Generation Change."

"Generation Change" connects young Muslims in different parts of the world who are working to better their societies.

There are already chapters in the United States and several other countries including Brazil.

These chapters include film-makers, entrepreneurs and scholars.

Trinidad and Tobago will host the first "Generation Change" chapter in this region.

We're very excited about this new project and look forward to another year of warm relations and friendship and a dedication to peace and mutual understanding.

Ramadan Kareem.

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